



# Kentucky Literacy Link

A Publication of the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE)

## Special points of interest:

- Start the new year outside with environmental literacy
- Daviess County implements the Literacy Design Collaborative through a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- School-wide literacy at the high school level

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## I Love That New Year Smell

Education is a unique field in so many ways. Few professions can claim they give their employees and clients a fresh start each year. Teachers and students, however, get a little vacation and then start anew.

Think about what a gift that is. You get time away from the challenges of daily work life — time to rest, reflect, revitalize and revise. Unlike others, you don't take this vacation while the work moves on; no, the work pauses — suspended — until you return refreshed and ready to tackle it. You don't have to worry about getting behind in your duties while you take a few weeks to tend to your own needs, treasure your family and treat yourself to adult literature, sandy beaches or late mornings in bed. You have an opportunity to think over the last year (away from its pressures), to look objectively at your practice and consider what to keep, what to modify and what to discard. It is up to you what happens

next.

You shape the school year ahead. What did last year teach you? Will you carry on in that same vein, or is it time to switch gears? It's entirely your choice.

You are free to take risks. To try something you never have, to be someone you've never been. You can step outside of your comfort zone and try a new instructional approach, incorporate technology in new and innovative ways, release your creativity and actively engage students in content-playing, discovering and exploring together. Some things won't work. Some will. Regardless, you will learn and grow as an educator as you challenge yourself and stretch your own boundaries.

Who will you be this year? Will you be [Miss Nelson](#) or [Viola Swamp](#)? [Joe Clark](#) or [Erin Gru-](#)

[well](#)? [Severus Snape](#) or [John Keating](#)?

Now for the scary thought. Who will you be teaching? [Hermione Granger](#) or those kids from [Dangerous Minds](#)? Before you panic, relax and remember that you are the change agent in your classroom. You set the tone. You can build an environment unlike any outside your four walls. Your classroom can be Narnia, Hogwarts, Terabithia or a new place altogether — woven from the dreams, imaginations and hearts of you and the children in your care.

Most likely, your kids will be somewhere solidly between *The Breakfast Club* and *Stepford Children*. Have an amazing year.

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## KDE Podcasts on iTunes U

The English/language arts specialists and consultants in KDE's Office of Next-Generation Learners have developed a series of short podcasts that you might find useful. Topics range from close reading to text complexity and more. There are also podcasts and resources from other KDE departments as well. Follow the steps below to access the podcasts.

- 1) Make sure iTunes is downloaded onto your computer. If you do not have iTunes, you can download it for free at <http://www.apple.com/itunes>.
- 2) After opening iTunes, choose "iTunes U" from the options on the left of your screen or from the menu bar at the top of your screen beneath the apple. (If you come to a screen with subscription videos,

- look to the bottom right of your screen and choose "iTunes U directory.")
- 3) Choose "K-12" from the options under "iTunes U Quick Links" on the right side of your screen.
- 4) Choose "Kentucky."
- 5) From here, you can check out "What's New," "Top Collections," "Top Downloads" and more.

## Spotlight: Daviess County Implements LDC

By Sharon Thurman

There is nothing more exciting (and a bit scary) than the start of a new school year, with its new teachers, students, schedules, school supplies and possibilities. The 2011-12 school year was particularly challenging with the implementation of new national standards in math and literacy and the uncertainty of how to incorporate those standards in a way that was best for our students. Daviess County Public Schools (DCPS) in Owensboro was fortunate to be awarded a Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to assist in implementing the literacy standards.

The Literacy Design Collaborative drew on research and the expertise of literacy experts from across the country to create templates that allow teachers the flexibility to create modules that incorporate reading and writing in a way that teaches content, rather than just adding it to the “real” content work.

During the 2010-11 school year, DCPS realized the value of the LDC design as participants in a pilot that involved a small group of teachers at each

middle and high school who volunteered to pilot two templates. With the grant funds for the 2011-12 school year, Julie Clark, DCPS director of Secondary Schools, launched LDC work through an ambitious plan with the goal of involving 90 percent of ELA, science and social studies teachers (both regular and special services).

Each school selected one administrator or staff developer and one teacher leader (selected from the pilot teachers) to serve on a district Design Team; a literacy staff developer also was hired to work with the Design Team to plan training sessions, develop materials for training and support, serve as support for all training sessions, and serve as support for teachers during all phases of LDC implementation. One additional way to provide direct support for teachers was to utilize the pilot teachers as mentors.

The Design Team decided to concentrate on template task two, an argumentation task. Each training session was carefully planned to break down the process of creating a module into small steps and to include time for teachers to work on each step. Some sessions happened during common planning time, some after school, with a small number of half-day sessions (made possible using grant funds for substitutes). Teachers appreciated this deliberate approach that allowed them time to process each step

and immediately do the work while they had support.

Training sessions included how to write a task, text selection, designing an instructional ladder, reading and writing strategies, scoring using the LDC rubric, descriptive feedback (which utilized articles from the December 2011 *Literacy Link* newsletter), and analyzing student work to determine instructional implications. All of the materials were archived on the district's intranet site so teachers could access training materials and share organizers and other tools they found and/or developed for mini-tasks.

Another critical piece of the DCPS work was feedback. After each training session, Julie Clark, Sharon Thurman (the literacy staff developer) and each school's leadership team reviewed each teacher's work and gave feedback. One-on-one conferencing followed as needed. This ongoing support from the district leadership, design team and mentor teachers both supported the teachers and provided quality control.

As teachers began teaching modules, it quickly became evident the training and leadership support were paying off. E-mails shared success stories. This came from an 8th-grade ELA teacher after a debate mini-task: “Will just asked me in homeroom: ‘When do we start writing our papers about this? I can't wait.’ I responded that we would be pre-writing next



class. He said, ‘Good, I'm ready to write now. Can I go ahead and start this at home?’ This is the first time I have ever had a student this excited to start a writing assignment. The debate has really got them thinking!”

A few days later the same teacher sent this e-mail: “This is ‘day one’ for my students writing their argumentative essays. Right now I am teaching my collab class, and Mrs. P. and I feel as if we have just witnessed a miracle. This class REALLY struggles with writing. They find it difficult to organize their ideas and get motivated to start a paper. Some students take an entire block to write a paragraph, even when constantly prompted and assisted. Lately, they have been extremely engaged in class and even participated in the debate, even though only a couple usually speak in front of the class. When I handed out the writing prompt today, I asked the students to write their introductory ideas and bring it to me to be approved. Halfway through the class period, the entire class is finished (which has not happened all year) but the best part is, they are all on topic, they all have some

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## Content Area Literacy: ELA and Environmental Literacy Go Hand-in-Hand

As the new school year begins, why not start it outside the walls of your building? You don't need a state-of-the-art outdoor classroom to inspire your students' writing, just a patch of green space and the wide open sky will do. And as you do, you will be jump-starting the implementation of the recently adopted Kentucky Environmental Literacy Plan (KELP).

In December 2011, the Kentucky Board of Education approved the implementation of KELP for K-12 students. KELP describes how Kentucky educators can help students meet the goals of becoming environmentally literate. KELP's history began in 1990 with the passing of KRS 157.900-905, which defined environmental education as "an education process dealing with the interrelation-

ships among the natural world and its man-made surroundings; is experience-based; interdisciplinary in its approach; and is a continuous life-long process that provides the citizenry with the basic knowledge and skills necessary to individually and collectively encourage positive actions for achieving and maintaining a sustainable balance between man and the environment." (<http://www.lrc.ky.gov/KRS/157-00/905.PDF>)

This summer, teacher consultants Vivian Bowles and Staci Sewell of the Eastern Kentucky University Writing Project led a week of interdisciplinary nature-based experiences for Madison County migrant students at the Bellevue Center in Richmond. The purpose of the camp was to provide K-7 English language learner/migrant students an opportunity to

increase vocabulary, descriptive language and expressive language; practice writing; and develop an awareness and appreciation of nature. Eighteen children ages 5-13 participated in the Writing-in-Nature Camp, where many of the activities occurred in the center's garden area. Campers explored the garden, listened to mentor texts and wrote about their experiences in a variety of ways. Campers recorded, classified and explained observations as "nature" or "not-nature;" described sensory experiences of plums (picking, listening to, smelling, tasting); described observations from a sensory scavenger hunt; created detailed illustrations of nature-themed poems; created nature collages as inspiration for adding details to their writing; used digital cameras to



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## Kentucky Writing Project State Network: 2012 Fall Conference on Literacy

**Where:** Porter Education Building, University of Louisville

**When:** September 8

**Who:** For P-12 teachers of all content areas, special education & ESL; administrators & curriculum specialists

**Additional Information:** six hours of professional development credit available. Co-hosted by the Louisville Writing Project and the Bluegrass Writing Project.

**FEATURING** strategies for meeting the new literacy standards:

- Teaching Argument
- Teaching Grammar
- Literacy in History/SS, Science, & Technical Subjects
- Integrating Technology into Teaching and Learning and more

Also featuring authors Jean Anne Clyde & Shelli Barber of *Breakthrough to Meaning* and picture book *There Come a Soldier* author Peggy Mercer,

### **Agenda**

#### **Friday**

7 p.m.: Pre-Conference Open Mic Night

#### **Saturday**

7:30 a.m.: Check-in/Coffee/Book Fair services courtesy of Courtlandt Books

8-9:10: Choice of Sessions

9:20-10:30: Choice of Sessions

10:30-11: Writing Project Demonstration Gallery/Exhibits open/early lunch shift

10:45-noon: Buffet Lunch

Writing Project



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## 2012-13 Next-Generation Student Council

In order to gain valuable feedback from Kentucky students and to engage student leaders in learning by doing, Commissioner of Education Terry Holliday has created the **Next-Generation Student Council**. This group will meet with the commissioner and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff, both in person and virtually, to discuss how decisions made at the state level are affecting students throughout Kentucky and provide feedback - from a student perspective - on critical issues impacting Kentucky students and schools.

The Next-Generation Student Council is a year-long program for Kentucky public school students in grades 10-12. The council will play a vital role in providing input regarding issues that face education in Kentucky

and work with KDE staff to develop ideas that will work to improve and transform education.

The council seeks students with refreshing ideas and thoughtful insight into how we can further improve our schools and student achievement. As such, **we encourage all students to apply** in order to represent the diverse academic, geographic, demographic and school-size variables particular to our state.

Students can click [here](#) to access the application and FAQs for the council. Please read the FAQs prior to completing the application. **KDE will accept applications for the 2012-13 Next-Generation Student Council Aug. 1-31. The deadline to apply is 4:30 p.m. ET Friday, August 31.**

A committee of KDE representatives will review and score all applications based on the answers provided to the questions. Appointments to the council will be based on how well the applicants communicated their ideas and goals. This committee will then select four students to serve on the 2012-13 council alongside the eight returning student council members.

Commissioner Holliday looks forward to working with the 2012-13 council and using the time together to generate results-oriented dialogue and solutions.

Questions? Contact Stephanie Siria at [stephanie.siria@education.ky.gov](mailto:stephanie.siria@education.ky.gov) or (502) 564-4201, ext. 4817.



## 2012 Fall Conference on Literacy

Demonstration Gallery/Exhibits open (Note: exhibits close after lunch.)

11:30-noon: Keynote Speaker  
Author Peggy Mercer

12:10-1:15 p.m.: Choice of Sessions

1:25-2:30: Choice of Sessions

**Luncheon Keynote Speaker:**  
**Peggy Mercer**

It's not surprising that our

award-winning author and musician was born in a building in Douglas, Georgia, that later became the first public library in the area. She is the author of an adult novel, *Strangers in Eden*, and three children's books, *Ten Cows to Texas*, *Peach When the Well Runs Dry* and *There Come a Soldier*. Peggy has a foundation called Give a Book and a Chance and presents programs to school classes and assemblies. One of her

guiding mottos is: "It doesn't take a village to raise a child. It takes books. Give a child books and he can raise himself!"

For official flyer and additional information click [here](#) or visit <http://www.kywritingproject.org>.

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## Rethinking Your Middle Grades Word Walls

Word walls are a vital component of a print-rich environment for enhancing student achievement (McGill-Franzen, Allington, Yokoi, & Brooks 1999). They create a visual representation, which linked through proper instruction allows students to interact with vocabulary. Older students also desire print-rich learning environments filled with books, computers, charts, labels, reference resources, bulletin boards, posters, displays of student work and word walls (Harmon, Wood, Hendrick, Vintinner, & Willeford 2009).

Word walls are an organized collection of words prominently displayed in a classroom. Used as an *interactive* tool to promote group learning, word walls can energize repetitive

studies.

The goals of a strong interactive word wall are multifaceted.

They:

- support instruction on general principles about words and how they function
- foster strong reading and writing comprehension and fluency
- provide reference support during reading and writing
- promote independence as students work with words to read, write and learn
- provide a visual map to strengthen cognitive connections, categorize words and deepen understandings
- support a strong content core of words that can

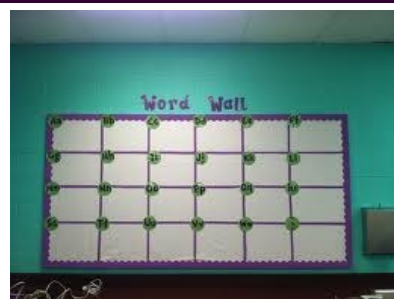
become part of a student's academic vocabulary

Instructional design in using word walls is vital to effectiveness. Just as with other learning goals, vocabulary requires direct, explicit instruction that includes building background information about targeted words; introducing words; making connections with words; applying words to authentic situations; and synthesizing words into reading, writing and speaking.

Guidelines for creating interactive word walls:

- Add words gradually as they appear in context. Never post words for an entire year.

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## Content Area Literacy

find geometric shapes and numbers around the center's campus, downloaded and organized their photographs on laptop computers for viewing and then used the pictures to create texts for a math vocabulary book; wrote and illustrated onomatopoeia inspired by sounds in nature; and wrote about water experiences based on poems, stories and the Incredible Journey (Project WET).

Since age and experience are not prerequisites for learning in nature or writing, campers were successful whether they were non-reader/writers, emergent reader/writers or very comfortable with the writing process. They (and their teachers) couldn't wait to get outside each morning and were

eager to share their nature inspired work with others. For a more detailed look at the lesson and resources of the Writing-In-Nature camp, click [here](#).

How can teachers balance the implementation of KELP with K-PREP and other high-stakes teaching demands? The KELP implementation team has created crosswalk documents that correlate ELA Common Core and Mathematics Common Core with the NAAEE (North American Association for Environmental Education) standards. These documents can be found on the KDE website [here](#).

So, pick up those journals and pencils, grab a few beach towels or carpet squares and a few

hand lenses if you have them, and head outside!

- Vivian Bowles, NBCT Middle-Childhood generalist, teaches 4th graders at Kit Carson Elementary in Richmond using the environment as an integrating context more than she used to but not as much as she could. She can be reached at [vivian.bowles@madison.kyschools.us](mailto:vivian.bowles@madison.kyschools.us).



**“Words do two major things: They provide food for the mind and create light for understanding and awareness.”**

**-Jim Rohn**

## 2012-13 Kentucky Reading Association Mini-Grants

The Kentucky Reading Association (KRA) is offering three mini-grant opportunities worth up to \$400 and a Celebrate Literacy award during the 2012-13 school year.

### Adolescent Classroom Literature Grant Application

A grant of up to \$400 is available for teachers for a thoughtfully presented classroom literacy project and/or library collection that increases children's access to print, including multicultural texts that inspire learning in the classroom. The grant recipient will receive complimentary registration for the 2012 KRA conference.

### New Teacher Conference Grant

A grant of up to \$400 is available for new teachers or teachers early in their careers (years 1-3) to attend the annual Kentucky Reading Association conference. This opportunity is designed to encourage new teachers to join a professional organization and become actively involved in the statewide network of teachers, educators and administrators dedicated to improving literacy for learners across the Commonwealth.

### P-5 Classroom Literature Grant Application

A grant of up to \$400 is available for teachers for a thoughtfully presented classroom literacy project and/or library collection that increases children's access to print, including multi-

cultural texts that inspire learning in the classroom.

### Celebrate Literacy Award

The Celebrate Literacy Award recognizes organizations, institutions and individuals that have made significant contributions at the local, state or national level. The celebration will familiarize the public with literacy activities in the community and call attention to the work that is being done by the schools, the Kentucky Reading Association and the International Reading Association to promote literacy.

Members can access all the necessary application information and documents [here](#). Please note that proof of membership must be submitted with each grant application

or award nomination.

Any interested members should send completed applications to Rebecca Woosley, 1324 Corona Dr. Lexington, KY 40514. Applications must be postmarked by the deadline on the application.

## Middle Grade Word Walls

- Make words accessible to students – use big, bold letters with bright backgrounds and graphics and place the wall where students can see the words.
  - Be highly selective about what words go on the wall – use power words and avoid common words that students use a lot in writing.
  - Interact daily with the words – model use of the words and reference the wall in lessons; chant the words, play games and engage students' active interaction with the wall.
  - Provide rich instruction (Beck, et al. 2008) – focus on student-created definitions and the use of context clues rather than dictionary definitions.
  - Create associations (Cunningham 2000) to strengthen students' ability to recall information long-term.
  - Provide repeated practice with words through social interaction among students.
- For a list of interactive games using word walls, visit <http://suite101.com/article/how-to-make-an-interactive-word-wall-a178936>.
- April Blakely is an assistant professor of middle grades literacy at Eastern Kentucky University. She can be reached at [april.blakely@eku.edu](mailto:april.blakely@eku.edu).

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**“Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.”**

**- Malcolm Forbes**

## Resources from the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Center

The Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) Center [website](#) offers numerous resources that may be helpful to you in literacy planning within your district and school. On the website you can register for an online community of practice, view SRCL newsletters and access all of their archived webinars. The webinars can serve as a source of information and PD.

Webinars cover a variety of topics. For example, Marcia Knoll, professor of educational administration and supervision at Hunter College City University of New York, walks participants through the processes of

Literacy Professional Learning Communities. In another, national educational consultant Mary E. Dahlgren discusses Response to Intervention (RtI) in secondary classrooms. All webinars can be accessed directly [here](#).

*-From the U.S. Department of Education: The purpose of the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy program (SRCL) is to advance literacy skills – including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing – for students from birth through grade 12, including limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities.*

*- From KDE: As a part of the federal Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy planning grant, [KDE] is developing a state literacy plan. The Kentucky Literacy Partnership was established in 1999 to coordinate statewide literacy efforts among the public and community. The partnership developed a literacy plan that has been the foundation for the state's work in literacy. Additionally, in 2007 Kentucky created an adolescent literacy task force that established recommendations relating to teacher certification, professional development, instructional resources, data-informed decision-making and support structures to improve adolescent literacy. To expand this work and to meet the needs of all students, in 2010 Kentucky developed a new State Literacy Team (SLT).*



## Back to School, Back to Literacy

By Jennifer Simpson

As everyone is preparing for another school year in Kentucky, literacy remains an important topic on every educator's mind. Incorporating literacy across the building can be especially challenging at the high school level. However, with a little creativity any teacher at any level can improve school-wide literacy. Here are some simple back-to-school ideas that are also inexpensive:

- **My Favorite Book:** Ask every adult (teacher, administrator, support staff, parent volunteers) to bring in their favorite book for a photo opportunity. You can post the photos on a school Web page or create a bulletin board (I used PowerPoint to put each person in an individual slide
- with the title and staff member's name, and then printed the slides for the bulletin board). This is a great way to encourage reading and discussions about reading in your school.
- **Poetry Night:** Set up your library or auditorium as a forum for students and families to share their favorite poems or original work. Have some pre-printed poems related to the season to hand out as people arrive for participation. Most newspapers will advertise your event for free.
- **Paying Literacy Forward:** Challenge your middle or high school students (and your staff) to read to someone younger. Students would write briefly about the experience and submit it for a chance to win a

donated gift card to a local restaurant. This is a great chance to have students share the love of reading.

- **Literacy Student of the Week:** Each week feature one student who has excelled in literacy. Encourage all teachers to nominate at least one student during the course of the year. If you get a large number nominated, then you can have "literacy students of the week" instead. Students could be featured in school newsletters, local newspapers and on the school website.

*Jennifer Simpson participated in the Language Arts Leadership Network and before that was a part of the Adolescent Literacy Coaching Project (EKU-Cadre*



*II). She also has been a Reading First state trainer and worked at McCreary Central High School as literacy coach for five years. Prior to that she taught special education at both the middle and high school level. She is now an assistant professor at the University of the Cumberlands. She can be reached at [jennifer.simpson@ucumberlands.edu](mailto:jennifer.simpson@ucumberlands.edu).*

## Steal These Tools

In order to support district and school leadership in their transition to the Common Core, Student Achievement Partners has developed four professional development modules, including presentations, facilitator's guides and activities. The modules are designed to be incorporated into professional development sessions or during back to school planning. The four modules cover the following topics: the Common Core Shifts in Math; the Common Core Shifts in ELA/Literacy; Text Dependent Questions in ELA/Literacy; and Instructional Leadership in the Context of the Common Core. In the next few issues of the *Literacy Link* we will share some of the modules with you, but you can access all of them now at

[www.achievethecore.org](http://www.achievethecore.org).

### ELA/Literacy Shifts Module

This one- to two-hour module is designed to provide participants with a deep understanding of the key shifts required by the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy.

This module is very user-friendly and includes a facilitator's guide, presentation slides with notes and handouts for participants. The presentation and handouts focus on three major shifts identified by Student Achievement Partners: building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts, reading and writing grounded in evidence from text and regular practice

with complex text and its academic vocabulary. Participants are provided thorough explanations of and guided practice with each identified shift.

KDE has drafted resources to assist with understanding more specific shifts between Core Content 4.1 and the Common Core (adopted as the Kentucky Core Academic Standards and referred to as KCAS) by grade level. You can access the shifts in writing [here](#) and in reading [here](#). Additionally, EngageNY has produced many materials to support implementing the Common Core, including a shifts document that you can access [here](#). Finally, when engaging in a professional development around the shifts, leaders may want to be prepared to encounter these [myths](#).



## Samplers from the New York State Education Department

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has developed a teaching tool for educators in the form of a series of sample questions that demonstrate the instructional shifts in the ELA and math Common Core Standards. These samples are also a good resource to aid students and parents in understanding what the new standards will look like in the classroom. The sample questions are available for grades 3 through 8 in both subjects. For each grade level and subject, there are approximately 12 questions, which include multiple choice, short constructed response and extended constructed response.

The sample questions are

teaching tools for educators and can be shared freely with students and parents. They are designed to help illuminate the way the Common Core should drive instruction and how students will be assessed starting in the 2012-13 school year.

These questions were developed primarily for the purposes of communications and training. They are **not test samplers** and are not meant to mirror full-length assessments. Passages for these ELA sample questions were taken from public domain sources, while passages for the state assessments can be drawn from copyrighted material. As such, some sample passages may include antiquated language, outdated topics and other shortcomings. Many are also well-read texts with which teachers and students may be very familiar.

This is not indicative of a shift on future state assessments. What it does indicate, however, is a shift in the level of text complexity. Each text was chosen to clearly communicate Common Core grade-level expectations for text complexity. Although definitions for select words in passages will be provided in future state assessments, they are not provided with these passages.

While educators from around the state have helped craft these sample questions, they have not undergone the same extensive review, vetting and piloting that occurs with actual questions used on the state assessments.

You can access the sample questions [here](#).

***“Live to learn  
and you will  
learn to live.”***

***-Proverb***





## Spotlight: Daviess County

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form of grabber, and not one student has complained about this assignment. Mrs. P. said to me, 'If people could only see the level of writing we saw at the beginning of the year compared to this, they would think it was a miracle!' I am proud of my students and definitely thankful for everything this LDC process has already taught me."

The work was not only engaging, it also promoted critical thinking and self-reflection and created a community of students using a common language of literacy. From a 7th-grade social studies teacher: "Student comments during class: 'their counterarguments were weak ... my evidence to support is ... I believe the text is biased because ... I can't stand it anymore, give me that rough draft, I am so ready to write ...'" Teacher comment: the student discussions sounded more like a college classroom than a middle school ... I was amazed."

LDC work began to convince content teachers that reading and writing does fit within their curriculum. A high school drama teacher shared this observation: "The interesting thing is the one student who made a perfect score would never have come close to writing something that exceptional for any other class. It proves that when anyone cares about the subject they can find the words to express themselves exceptionally well. I wasn't convinced this would work or that I would get

good work, but I'm a believer now." One 8th-grade student told her science teacher as she worked on her argumentative essay, "I think I am going to get my best grade ever, because I really understand it."

As the year ended, the results exceeded the Julie Clark's vision. Eight schools were engaged in LDC work: three middle schools, two high schools and three alternative schools. In addition to 94 percent of ELA, science and social studies teachers (both regular and special services), teachers from the areas of agriculture, art, drama, fine arts, foreign language and music developed modules. Those 164 teachers created 106 modules.

As the Design Team reflected on the entire year, we found the LDC work:

- assisted with implementation of the common core literacy standards
- increased incorporation of reading and writing strategies in content classrooms
- increased collaboration between teachers (on grade level and across content areas)
- built leadership capacity
- emphasized the importance of quality tasks based on significant content
- increased utilization of student data to inform instructional practice
- increased awareness of importance of formative assessment
- met many of the requirements of the writing, practical living/career studies and arts & humanities Program Reviews
- exemplified that you CAN teach content through reading and writing
- assisted school staffs in identifying specific instructional goals for 2012-13

DCPS is fortunate to have the Gates grant to continue LDC work for the 2012-13 school year. The Design Team is scheduled to meet before school begins to refine the tentative timeline created in May for 2012-13. Teachers already started working on plans for the new school year at the final training session, an all-day session at the end of May. Plans include selecting from all 29 template tasks to create a second module and having 100 percent participation from ELA, science and social studies teachers. Vicki Riley, DCPS director of Elementary Schools, started LDC work (funded by the district outside of the grant) with a small group of elementary principals, staff developers and teachers. She plans to expand this work in all 12 elementary schools.



The 2012-13 school year will again be exciting (and a bit scary), but through the LDC work DCPS has the tools to meet the continued challenges of implementing the literacy common core standards. With the continued support of the Gates Foundation, the Literacy Design Collaborative, KDE consultant Mary Rudd, and the dedicated work of DCPS administrators, the Design Team and the teachers, the students of Daviess County will continue to be engaged in quality literacy instruction – in all content areas – that will equip them with college and career readiness skills.

Sharon Thurman is the literacy staff developer for the Daviess County school district. She can be reached at [sharon.thurman@daviess.kyschools.us](mailto:sharon.thurman@daviess.kyschools.us).



## Help

Your contributions of ideas and lessons that work are welcome. E-mail

[kay.hardaway@education.ky.gov](mailto:kay.hardaway@education.ky.gov)

to submit. Your submissions may be included in the *Literacy Link* to help connect teachers across the state by sharing ideas, insights and best practices.

Access this and past  
*Literacy Links* on KDE's  
website:  
[Click Here](#)



### If you have questions or concerns, we want to help. Contact:

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## Feedback from the Field

We love to hear from you. Your feedback helps us to tailor the *Link* to best meet the needs of teachers. Tell us how you're using it. Tell us how you'd like to use it. Tell us what you want to see more or less of - whatever you have to say, just send it our way.

"The "Literacy Link" newsletters are wonderful ... I just

want you to know that I'm reading it and sharing the information and the links with my students (*pre-service teachers*)."

-Rene M,

" KDE's *Literacy Link* is a great resource for keeping up with current literacy issues and discovering great literacy work across the state. The December 2011 issue contained articles

about descriptive feedback which met a need in our LDC training. We used the articles in a jigsaw activity, both to model a great reading strategy and to illustrate the importance of providing students with descriptive feedback in conjunction with the scoring using the LDC rubric."

- Sharon T.



## Additional Reading and Other Resources

- This Teaching Channel video [Inquiry Based Teaching: Discussing Non-Fiction](#) shows how to analyze non-fiction in an inquiry-based method, in light of the Common Core State Standards' (CCSS) shift to more informational reading. (Note: adult language is sometimes used to talk about slave narratives in this lesson.)
- 2010 National Teacher of the Year Sarah Brown Wessling addresses another CCSS shift in this [video](#): the shift away from texts taught in isolation.
- Another shift in the CCSS is a focus on argument instead of persuasion. While persuasion may often rely on emotional appeals and personal experience, argument requires more textual evidence and close-reading of the text. This [lesson](#) shows a multi-step approach to help students learn to focus on how an argument is constructed.

